

Application No. 09/722,749
Amendment filed on July 19, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated April 21, 2004

Attorney Docket No. 040071-186
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Remarks

Claims 2-12 and 14-24 are pending, with claims 2, 5, 8, 12, 14, 17, 20, and 24 being in independent form.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowability of claims 2-12 and 14-24, of which claims 2, 5, 8, 12, 14, 17, 20, and 24 have been placed in independent form by this Amendment.

It will be understood that the scopes of claims 2-12 and 14-24 have not been narrowed or even changed by this Amendment. Moreover, since these claims have already been indicated as allowable, they have not been amended for reasons related to the statutory requirements for a patent but simply to expedite prosecution of this application. Accordingly, the amendment of these claims does not raise any presumptions regarding, nor trigger the application of the doctrine of prosecution history estoppel to limit the range of equivalents.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant considers the application to be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests notice thereof at an early date. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed number if, in the Examiner's opinion, such a call would aid in the examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 19, 2004

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent by facsimile transmission to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 to the following facsimile number:

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Jennie Sned